



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

mouthed stoves chill the spirit while they bake the flesh with their grim and undemonstrative hospitality. Already are the railroads displacing the companionable cheer of crackling walnut with the dogged self-complacency and sullen virtue of anthracite. Even where wood survives, he is too often shut in the dreary madhouse cell of an air-tight, round which one can no more fancy a social mug of flip circling than round a coffin. Let us be thankful that we can sit in Mr. Whittier's chimney-corner and believe that the blaze he has kindled for us shall still warm and cheer, when a wood fire is as faint a tradition in New as in Old England.

We have before had occasion to protest against Mr. Whittier's carelessness in accents and rhymes, as in pronouncing "ly'ceum," and joining in unhallowed matrimony such sounds as *awn* and *orn*, *ents* and *ence*. We would not have the Muse emulate the unidiomatic preciseness of a Normal schoolmistress, but we cannot help thinking that, if Mr. Whittier writes thus on principle, as we begin to suspect, he errs in forgetting that thought so refined as his can be fitly matched only with an equal refinement of expression, and loses something of its charm when cheated of it. We hope he will, at least, never mount Pega'sus, or water him in Heli'con, and that he will leave Mu'seum to the more vulgar sphere and obtuser sensibilities of Barnum. Where Nature has sent genius, she has a right to expect that it shall be treated with a certain elegance of hospitality.

18. — *Herman, or Young Knighthood.* By E. FOXTON. Boston: Lee and Shepard. 1866. 2 vols. 12mo.

THE rank of this book will be very differently estimated by different readers, according as it is judged by the pure canons of literary art, or by the rules of morals. The critical reader, whose artistic perceptions are keen, will be struck with defects in it, which the reader whose moral sympathies are active will overlook and utterly disregard, in view of the prevailing spirit and intention of the work. It is a true product of New England, in which art is wholly subordinated to moral purpose. It not only gives expression to sentiments and opinions characteristic of the intellectual and moral temper of New England, but it gives expression to them in a form not less characteristic of that temper. At the time the book was written and first printed, eight years ago, it required not only an enlightened but a courageous mind to form and to declare the opinions expressed in it. No popular magazine in the country would at that time have ventured to accept it for publica-

tion. The moral convictions of which it asserts the truth were often quite opposed to the convictions of society at large. And it adds to the interest of this fact to know, as it is now generally known, that the book was written by a woman.

The course of events has fully proved the justness of her views on slavery, the central subject of her story, and has brought us all to her way of thinking. But it is only justice to her to remember, that, while the nation was yet hesitating over the question, "Is this right?" she said, "It is wrong," and, holding firm to facts which men generally disregarded, drew from them the lessons in their keeping. It was not womanly compassion alone that forced upon her the opinions she held, but patriotic foresight and insight revealed to her the imminent dangers which then threatened us, and which we have since then been compelled to face and to overcome.

Though the boldness and truthfulness of the anti-slavery doctrines of this book give it its principal interest, yet it is crowded, even overcrowded, with reflections always thoughtful and liberal in tone upon many other of the subjects which most occupy public attention. She treats of the position of women and of clergymen in society, of the future life of animals, of the observance of Sunday, of the characteristics of opposing religious sects, of the modes of life under the different stages of American civilization, — and of these and other like topics she writes with the ability and force derived from careful consideration, from sincerity of conviction and earnest purpose. Her opinions are always intelligent and high-toned, and are stamped with a strongly marked individuality.

It is because we hope that the author of *Herman*, having gained the ear of the public, will make use of her talents and opportunities in writing another book, that we venture to point out one fault, partly of thought and partly of style, which is a serious injury to the effect of some portions of her present volumes. It is the lingering on *externals*, the wasting time on their description, when they are of precisely that kind which is valueless because furnishing no clew to what lies beneath them. Given a certain position in society, a certain amount of wealth, a certain degree of physical beauty and of conventional refinement, there must inevitably follow, so inevitably as not to be worth the noticing, certain habits, certain elegances of life. Whenever a novelist speaks of the pretty boots, or the white hands, or the "golden-beaded purple silk purses" of his heroes and heroines, or describes the silver and the fruit on their dinner-tables, or the abundance of their breakfasts, that moment he shows either that his characters are not accustomed to such things, and therefore are disproportionately regardful of them,

or else that he himself, in so carefully observing them, is wasting his force on non-essential particulars. It is quite certain that the more perfect the harmony between the nature and circumstances of a person in real life,—and it should be the same in fiction,—the less do they think, or do others in social intercourse with them think, of the mere circumstances considered in themselves.

The study of the use of detail in romance writing is far too little pursued by our novelists. The readers of Miss Edgeworth's *Helen* are sure of the aristocratic elegance of the life at Clarendon Park, and yet the assurance comes from what may be called internal evidence alone; there are very few details given concerning it in the book. It is perhaps more difficult to trust to the reader's assuming that the ladies and gentlemen of an American story have homes and habits befitting ladies and gentlemen, but the difficulty vanishes the moment there can be no doubt felt that they are ladies and gentlemen.

But *Herman* is not a book to be judged by its short-comings in literary art. It is a book that no one can read without feeling a sense of merit in it beyond the range of art, and without recognizing the possession by its writer of qualities which deserve and receive the homage of the most genuine respect.

19. *The Works of the Right Honorable EDMUND BURKE.* Revised Edition. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1866. Vols. IV and V. pp. 482 and 508.

It is very well known to all persons enterprising enough to read now and then in those volumes whose presence is essential to the respectability of all high-caste libraries, that the standard editions of what are called the "British Classics" are full of blunders. Whoever buys such standard editions must expect to be his own editor, and to see the broad phylacteries of margin in which he took delight disfigured with pencil-marks that grow more indignantly emphatic and reckless as he reads on. That scrupulous accuracy which once made the fame of printers has almost gone out of fashion, the world over, and the deceitful shows of broad margin, disagreeably tinted paper, and handsome printing have taken the place of the one solid merit that above all others should distinguish a book,—its correctness. What is worse, the blunders multiply with the editions till, in some cases, even if we get sense at all, we cannot be sure of its being the sense of the author. Here, for example, is a stanza from the *Annus Mirabilis* of Dryden, which, in three different editions we happen to have at hand, stands thus. (He is speaking of France.)